

**William Milnor to George Washington, October 19, 1773,  
Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers.  
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**FROM MR. WILLIAM MILNOR.** <sup>1</sup>

PHILADA. Octobr. 19th: 1773

HONOUR'D SIR/

Agreable to your request, I sent you 2 Yds Boulting cloth, which I hope you have receiv'd ere now, 'tis I think much finer than the sample I receiv'd from Mr. Addams I am authorized by Mr Williams to inform you, that if it should not suite, he will take it again.—

The several Arcticles Capt. Cox left with me for Mrs Washington, I have ship'd on board of the sloop Norfolkpacket Capt. Francis Gilbert bound to Allexandria and directed them to the Care of Mr William Herbert, Mr Dougherty the Owner of the Sloop, was fearfull of taking them on board, least they should cause his Vessel to be seized, it was in vain for me to Urge the Weakness of his timidity, I therefore at his request Packed them carefully in a fishbarrel with two Rowes of Middletons biscuit at each End, an Account of which, I have sent to Mr Herbert—

Permit me, dear sir to remind you of our Salthouse and be Assured, that we will At any time Obligate ourselves to pay you the rent of it for any term of years you may think necessary, I am determin'd for my part to carry on the fishery with spirit & resolution,<sup>2</sup> your exceeding kindness, to us hitherto, is the greatest encouragemt. for us to proceed, & with

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the Permission of divine Providence under the Countenance of so great an encourager of Industry I fear not but our labours will be crown'd with success—be pleased (sir) to give my best respects to your Lady, to those young ladies I saw at your House & to Mr Lund Washington, & blieve me to be, Sir Your most Obedient Humble Sert

### WILLIAM MILNOR

1 For the following full and interesting note I am indebted to Hannah Milnor Ljungstedt (Mrs. Olof Ljungstedt), of Washington, D. C. Born in New Jersey; settled near Falsington, Buck County, Penn.; finally made his home in Philadelphia, where he became a prominent merchant, and after, the Revolution was appointed first gauger of the port, in which office he was succeeded by his son Isaac, and grandson Robert Milnor. He was anxious to obtain a captaincy in the regular army, but was dissuaded by family and friends. He made himself very useful, however, in carrying despatches, etc. (in a false-bottomed chaise), and for this and other services was disowned by the Friends. I have been told, but cannot verify, that his “reading out” was for owning slaves. He became a “Free and Independent Quaker,” but before his death reunited with the regular body. William Milnor married Anna Brientnall, probably of the same family as the Joseph Brientnall mentioned by Franklin in his autobiography. “Joseph Brientnall, a copier of deeds ... a great lover of poetry ... writing some that was tolerable ... very ingenious in making little knick-knackereries & of sensible conversation.” Anna Brientnall Milnor died aged seventy-three, and was buried in the old graveyard at 5th and Arch streets, where Franklin lies. They had five children: Isaac, a merchant in Philadelphia, and, like his father, gauger of the port, married Hannah Parrish, and left descendants; Hannah married Rev. John Palmer Robinson, and Mary married William Dick. Although Isaac Milnor had eleven children, the male line in this branch is extinct. James (second son of William and Anna), a lawyer, for a while in Congress, became finally a noted divine, and was rector for many years of St. George's Parish, New York. He married (Feb. 28, 1799) his “best of friends,” Eleanor Pawling, and was for this marriage “read out of meeting.” William (son of William and Anna) was in Congress, and later became mayor of Philadelphia. From him it is believed descended the Burlington branch, New Jersey. The Coates are also connected with this family by marriage or blood.

2 There were in Philadelphia two fishing associations to which many men of prominence and social proclivities belonged. The earlier society, called “Fort St. David,” had its house at the Falls of Schuylkill; the other, “State in Schuylkill,” built their fishery on Rambo's Rock, below Gray's Ferry. Watson, in his *Annals of Philadelphia*, says that “much good living was enjoyed there.” It is to the latter company that William Milnor refers, of which he was an enthusiastic member.